



# **Disease Outbreak Emergency Preparedness Plan**



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## **MISSION OF ABLED, INC.**

**The mission of ABLED, Inc. is to empower people with intellectual disabilities to creatively explore all possible avenues of freedom, education, and skills to live and enjoy their lives to the fullest extent possible.**

## **PRINCIPLES**

ABLED, Inc. will promote quality by focusing on customer satisfaction, employee involvement, teamwork, communication, and continuous improvement.

To fulfill its mission, ABLED, Inc. believes:

- Every person was created with value and purpose.
- Every person should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every person can grow and learn through community experiences.
- Every person should enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- Every person has the right to be the primary decision maker in his/her life and carries the responsibility for the direction it takes.
- Every person is protected by the full weight of the constitution and its amendments.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

In keeping with the mission and principles of ABLED, Inc., the extended family home model is a residential service alternative. A person with an intellectual disability may choose to further their independence and community involvement while experiencing life in a more natural setting.



The safety and well-being of participants and staff is important as well as the continuity of services. The precautions laid out below should be followed in the event of a potential disease outbreak.

## **A. Prevention**

Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with those who are sick.

Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze then throw the tissue in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a household cleaning spray or wipe.

## **B. Travel**

Notify ABLED of travel plans according to our current policy. Please avoid nonessential travel based on potential health risks identified by the CDC.

## **C. Monitor**

Monitor for signs of illness. Identify symptoms, potential for exposure, incubation period and persons at higher risk.

## **D. Notification**

Stay home and call your doctor if you develop symptoms. Calling first will allow for pre-screening and avoid exposure to other members of the community. Follow doctor's recommendations. In the event of a change of condition that involves the hospital or emergency medical care, immediately call ABLED & the DHHS Service Coordinator then submit a GER in Therap within 24 hours.

## **E. Stay Calm**

Try to avoid unnecessary anxiety. Share accurate information about how the disease spreads without increasing fear. How you respond will impact how participants respond. Follow doctor's orders and maintain privacy and confidentiality. Thank healthcare workers, avoid stigma and be understanding of the community-wide impact.



## **F. Information**

Be properly informed by visiting DHHS or CDC's websites and avoiding fear-based media reporting.

## **G. Plan Ahead**

Maintain supervision, habilitation and staff ratios outlined in the ISP. Identify back up staff and have them approved, trained and ready through ABLED.

Identify those at greater risk and plan ways to care for them to avoid serious complications. Know medical conditions and have access to emergency contacts, medications, medical supplies, medications lists, etc.

Contact healthcare providers and/or pharmacies to ask about best protocols for maintaining regular inventory of medications and/or medical supplies. Take care of the emotional health of your household members too.

Maintain a two-week supply of water and food. Have household items, medical supplies and groceries on hand including non-perishable food items to minimize trips to the store.

Create a household plan of action. Talk with household members, other relatives, and friends to discuss. Learn about the emergency operations plan at your child's school or childcare facility. Stay in touch with others by phone or email.

Get to know your neighbors. Talk with your neighbors about emergency planning. Consider ways of getting food brought to your house if you become sick. You may need to ask for help from friends, family, neighbors, community resources such as delivery services, etc.

Choose a specific room and a bathroom, if possible, in your home that can be used to separate sick household members from those who are healthy. Plan to clean these rooms, as needed, when someone is sick. Wear disposable gloves, use appropriate cleaners and use a dedicated lined trash.



## **H. Disease Outbreak**

Put distance between yourself and other people if the disease starts to spread in our community. Stay home as much as possible and avoid crowds and places with poor ventilation.

Know the protocol if there is an outbreak. Stay informed through local news and check for updates from the DHHS or CDC.

Don't be afraid to self-isolate. Public health officials may recommend community actions to reduce exposure. These actions can slow the spread and reduce the impact of disease. Be prepared to watch lots of movies, play games and anything else to occupy the time so no one is bored.

Prepare to be flexible. As part of their emergency preparedness planning, DHHS has previously worked with CMS to evaluate and explore all areas that allow flexibility in service definitions and payments in the event of a disaster declaration.

## **I. Communication**

Monitor Therap Scomms regularly for important updates or instructions from ABLED. Staff should continue to stay in regular contact with our executive team by responding to all requests and notifying of sensitive situations. ABLED already communicates efficiently and timely through text, Scomm, Tlog, GER and/or email.

## **J. Operations**

ABLED is structured for staff and participants to work remotely. We do not own or operate a provider facility. Participants live with family, on their own or with Shared Living Providers.

Staff work independently coordinating plans, schedules and activities that best meet each participant's needs. Ratios for staff to participants are generally 1:1. Staff use their private vehicle to provide transportation.

All documents and records are maintained and accessed electronically.

Staff should notify EVP Operations, Pierre Allen, at 402-417-2613 in the event they are unable to provide scheduled services or call the office at 402-904-7433 if they are unable to reach him.



## **K. At Risk Planning**

ABLED will identify back up staff for participants as well as at-risk staff and participants, including those who live on their own or have severe chronic medical conditions. ABLED will try to minimize exposure, prepare for increased absences and allow for flexibility.